

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An improved Internet Directory System, comprising:

at least one upper-level Directory Provider (DP), providing a directory of at least
5 upper-level fields and/or super-categories and categories, and referencing a plurality of
independently owned (from each other and from the Directory Provider) for-profit
Category Directory Websites (CDWs);

the plurality of CDWs each providing at least a lower level directory referencing
websites (WSs) relating to a category;

10 the CDWs being identified as Category Directory Websites participating in the
System by at least a mark or a URL portion; and

a business model imposed on at least the CDWs.

2. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes standards of
operation imposed on the plurality of CDWs by the System.

15 3. The System of claim 2 wherein a standard of operation includes professional
management.

4. The System of claim 2 wherein a standard of operation includes at least one of
organization and comprehensiveness.

5. The System of claim 2 wherein a standard of operation includes up-to-dateness.

20 6. The System of claim 2 wherein a standard of operation, imposed on at least a
subset of CDWs, includes a CDW offering users at least one of an option to move to a
secure site to negotiate a purchase and an organization of pertinent comparative data on a
subject within the category.

7. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes charging at least
25 some WSs for being referenced.

8. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes at least some WSs
being charged for at least one service offered by the System.

9. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes a participating CDW
providing advertising space on its site.

30 10. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes a CDW promoting,
by advertising, at least one of its category and referenced websites.

11. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes at least one advertising/promotion firm that provides advertising/promotion for a category and/or a CDW site substantially in return for advertising space on a CDW site.

12. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes offering webpage enhancement services at a volume discount.

13. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes substantially funding operation of a CDW by payments from WSs.

14. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes selection of categories for CDWs large enough to support a website and small enough to be managed according to the business plan.

15. The System of claim 1 wherein the business model includes contracting by at least one DP to secure a comprehensive listing of CDWs.

16. The System of claim 1 wherein the URL portion comprises a TLD.

17. The System of claim 16 wherein the URL portion comprises a TLD unique to CDWs and DPs in the system.

18. The System of claim 1 that includes at least one cutting edge technology cost effectively offered to appropriate referenced WSs.

19. The System of claim 1 wherein the plurality includes hundreds.

20. The System of claim 1 wherein the Directory Provider comprises an ISP or Search Engine.

21. The System of claim 1 wherein 1) the category and 2) at least one field and/or super-category are both more than simply geographic.

22. A method for providing an Internet Directory System, comprising:

organizing an independent for-profit directory website to reference websites within a category;

participating in an Internet Directory System by said directory website by contracting to be referenced as one of a plurality of Category Directory Websites (CDW) on at least one independent upper-level Directory Provider's (DP) upper-level directory of at least fields and/or super-categories and categories, the upper-level directory referencing the CDWs;

adopting a URL portion or a mark identifying said directory website as a participating Category Directory Website; and

abiding by a System business model imposed on said Category Directory Websites.

5 23. The method of claim 22 wherein the business model includes standards of operation.

24. The System of claim 22 wherein the URL portion comprises a TLD.

25. The System of claim 22 wherein the URL portion comprises a TLD unique to CDWs and DPs in the system.

10 26. The System of claim 22 wherein the business model includes offering at least one cutting edge technology cost effectively to appropriate referenced WSs.

27. The System of claim 23 wherein a standard of operation includes professional management.

15 28. The System of claim 23 wherein a standard of operation includes at least one of organization and comprehensiveness.

29. The System of claim 23 wherein a standard of operation includes up-to-dateness.

30. The System of claim 22 wherein the business model includes providing advertising space on a CDW site.

20 31. The System of claim 22 wherein the business model includes promoting at least one of a site and a category by advertising.

32. The System of claim 22 wherein the Directory Provider includes an ISP and/or a Search Engine.

25 33. The System of claim 22 wherein the business model includes providing advertising promotion for a CDW site in return for receiving advertising space on a CDW site.

34. The System of claim 22 wherein the business model includes, for at least a subset of CDWs, offering users at least one of an option to move to a secure site to negotiate a purchase and an organization of pertinent comparative data on a subject within the category.

30 35. The System of claim 22 wherein the business model includes charging at least some websites for at least one service such that a profit is made.

36. The System of claim 22 wherein (1) the category and (2) at least one field and/or super-category are both more than simply geographic.